

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 38 are pending in this application. Claims 6, 11 through 13, 25, 26, 28, 29, 31, and 32 have been amended and Claims 34 through 38 have been newly presented in order to alternatively and more broadly define the various features of Applicant's disclosed inventions.

In Paper No. 17 the Examiner noted that Claims 12 and 13 define Applicant's second borne. In order to broaden the scope of coverage defined by Claims 12 and 13, Applicant has deleted lines 2 and 3, in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion. Dependent Claims 34 and 35 are newly added to more broadly define Applicant's disclosed structure, and to additionally cover possible modifications of Applicant's disclosed structures such as the circumferential surface constituting a ridge while the adjoining surface constitutes a second circumferential surface with a lesser diameter, for example.

These claims are allowable for the reasons set forth in Applicant's earlier response and, in view of the complete absence of the combination of features defined by these claims, in any of the prior art.

Applicant notes that the designation of Paper No. 17 as "final" is premature; Claims 25 through 33 have not yet been considered. Applicant notes however, that the Examiner incorrectly addressed Paper No. 17. Without correspondence to Applicant, the Examiner then issued Paper No. 20.

In Paper No. 20, the Examiner objected to Claims 11, 25 and 32. The basis for the objection has been removed by the foregoing amendments.

Claims 12, 13, 28, 29 and 31 through 33 were rejected under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112, principally on questions of antecedent basis. The grounds for these rejections have been removed by the foregoing amendment. In one exception however, the Examiner questions Claims 32 and 33, namely a network of plugs. These claims depend upon allowable independent claims as will be explained in the following paragraph. Accordingly, there is no basis for the quasi-requirement of restriction, particularly at this point of prosecution. Moreover, the parent independent claim is generic to several of the classes previously identified in the requirement for restriction. In view of the foregoing amendments therefore, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 25 through 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as rendered obvious by a proposed combination of Aston '042 and Clarkson '859. Although Applicant disagrees with the basis for this rejection, Applicant notes that as amended, Claim 25 clearly recites that the electrical operator is borne by the plug, a feature neither taught nor suggested by the proposed combination of Aston '042 and Clarkson '859. Specifically, in this proposed combination both the operator and the logic circuits are located outside of plug 11 of Aston '042. The structure shown for example, in Figs. 5-6B of the secondary reference preserve this location. In view of the fact that neither of these reference either appreciates nor recognizes the need for compactedness as well advantageous ability of retrofitting a lock simply by replacing the plug, as opposed to both the plug in the cylinder or,

alternatively, of structurally modifying the entire lock, negates any suggestion of obviousness. Accordingly, Claims 25 through 35 are deemed to be patentably distinguishable over the art.


The Examiner has referred to a telephone discussion initiated by the Examiner on 18 January 1999. It should be remembered that Applicant's undersigned attorney was engaged in the preparation of a different and unrelated application at the time of the discussion, and was unable to immediately respond to the Examiner's telephone request. Moreover, the Examiner immediately issued Paper No. 17 on 21 January 1999. The Supplemental Amendment filed on the 20th had been in preparation and there was no reason not to immediately file the Supplemental Amendment in order to present the claims desired by Applicant for examination. The Examiner's care to review these claims is noted with appreciation.

A fee of \$45 (**SMALL ENTITY**) is incurred by addition of five (5) claims in excess of 33. Applicant's checks drawn to the order of Commissioner accompanies this Amendment. Should the check become lost, should other fees be incurred, the Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 02-4943 of Applicant's undersigned attorney in the amount of such fees.

Applicant further notes that two Notices of Change of Address have been filed in this application; to date, the Group Director seems to have studiously ignored both. Consequently, Applicant is not timely receiving correspondence from the Office. It is hoped that this will be corrected without further inconvenience or expense to the Applicant.

In view of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the application, withdraw the objections and/or rejections and pass the application to issue in view of the above amendments and/or remarks. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicant's attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



Robert E. Bushnell,
Attorney for the Applicant
Registration No.: 27,774

1522 "K" Street N.W., Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 638-5740

Folio: P53821C
Date: 7/16/99
I.D.: REB/kf